

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

JAWANTA J. LAMBERT,
CDCR #V-42105,

Plaintiff,

vs.
J. MARTINSON; DOMINGO URIBE, Jr.;
D. DAVIS; J. SAIS; L. CALDERON;
D. FOSTON; L VALENZUELA,

Defendants.

Civil No. 10cv1978 JLS (RBB)

ORDER:

(1) GRANTING PLAINTIFF'S MOTION TO PROCEED IN FORMA PAUPERIS, IMPOSING INITIAL PARTIAL FILING FEE AND GARNISHING BALANCE FROM PRISONER'S TRUST ACCOUNT PURSUANT TO 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a) [Doc. No. 5];

AND

(2) DIRECTING U.S. MARSHAL TO EFFECT SERVICE OF COMPLAINT PURSUANT TO FED.R.CIV.P. 4(c)(3) & 28 U.S.C. § 1915(d)

Jawanta Lambert ("Plaintiff"), a state prisoner currently incarcerated at Kern Valley State Prison located in Delano, California, and proceeding in pro se, has filed a civil rights Complaint pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983. Plaintiff alleges that his constitutional rights were violated when he was housed at Centinela State Prison in 2009.

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1 Plaintiff has not prepaid the \$350 filing fee mandated by 28 U.S.C. § 1914(a); instead he
 2 has filed a Motion to Proceed *In Forma Pauperis* (“IFP”) pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a) [Doc.
 3 No. 5].

4 **I.**

5 **MOTION TO PROCEED IFP**

6 All parties instituting any civil action, suit or proceeding in a district court of the United
 7 States, except an application for writ of habeas corpus, must pay a filing fee of \$350. *See* 28
 8 U.S.C. § 1914(a). An action may proceed despite a party’s failure to prepay the entire fee only
 9 if that party is granted leave to proceed IFP pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a). *See Rodriguez v.*
 10 *Cook*, 169 F.3d 1176, 1177 (9th Cir. 1999). Prisoners granted leave to proceed IFP however,
 11 remain obligated to pay the entire fee in installments, regardless of whether their action is
 12 ultimately dismissed. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(1) & (2); *Taylor v. Delatoore*, 281 F.3d 844, 847
 13 (9th Cir. 2002).

14 The Court finds that Plaintiff has submitted an affidavit which complies with 28 U.S.C.
 15 § 1915(a)(1), and that he has attached a certified copy of his trust account statement pursuant to
 16 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a)(2) and S.D. CAL. CivLR 3.2. Plaintiff’s trust account statement indicates
 17 that he has insufficient funds from which to pay filing fees at this time. *See* 28 U.S.C.
 18 § 1915(b)(4) (providing that “[i]n no event shall a prisoner be prohibited from bringing a civil
 19 action or appealing a civil action or criminal judgment for the reason that the prisoner has no
 20 assets and no means by which to pay the initial partial filing fee.”). Therefore, the Court
 21 **GRANTS** Plaintiff’s Motion to Proceed IFP [Doc. No. 5] and assesses no initial partial filing
 22 fee per 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(1). However, the entire \$350 balance of the filing fees mandated
 23 shall be collected and forwarded to the Clerk of the Court pursuant to the installment payment
 24 provisions set forth in 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(1).

25 However, the Secretary of the CDCR, or his designee, shall collect this initial fee *only if*
 26 *sufficient funds in Plaintiff’s account are available at the time this Order is executed* pursuant
 27 to the directions set forth below. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(4) (providing that “[i]n no event shall
 28 a prisoner be prohibited from bringing a civil action or appealing a civil action or criminal

1 judgment for the reason that the prisoner has no assets and no means by which to pay the initial
 2 partial filing fee.”); *Taylor v. Delatoore*, 281 F.3d 844, 850 (9th Cir. 2002) (finding that 28
 3 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(4) acts as a “safety-valve” preventing dismissal of a prisoner’s IFP case based
 4 solely on a “failure to pay ... due to the lack of funds available to him when payment is
 5 ordered.”). The remaining balance shall be collected and forwarded to the Clerk of the Court
 6 pursuant to the installment payment provisions set forth in 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(1).

7 **II.**

8 **SCREENING PURSUANT TO 28 U.S.C. §§ 1915(e)(2) & 1915A(b)**

9 The Prison Litigation Reform Act also obligates the Court to review complaints filed by
 10 all persons proceeding IFP and by those, like Plaintiff, who are “incarcerated or detained in any
 11 facility [and] accused of, sentenced for, or adjudicated delinquent for, violations of criminal law
 12 or the terms or conditions of parole, probation, pretrial release, or diversionary program,” “as
 13 soon as practicable after docketing.” *See* 28 U.S.C. §§ 1915(e)(2) and 1915A(b). Under these
 14 provisions of the PLRA, the Court must sua sponte dismiss complaints, or any portions thereof,
 15 which are frivolous, malicious, fail to state a claim, or which seek damages from defendants who
 16 are immune. *See* 28 U.S.C. §§ 1915(e)(2)(B) and 1915A; *Lopez v. Smith*, 203 F.3d 1122, 1126-
 17 27 (9th Cir. 2000) (en banc) (§ 1915(e)(2)); *Resnick v. Hayes*, 213 F.3d 443, 446 (9th Cir. 2000)
 18 (§ 1915A); *see also Barren v. Harrington*, 152 F.3d 1193, 1194 (9th Cir. 1998) (discussing
 19 § 1915A).

20 “[W]hen determining whether a complaint states a claim, a court must accept as true all
 21 allegations of material fact and must construe those facts in the light most favorable to the
 22 plaintiff.” *Resnick*, 213 F.3d at 447; *Barren*, 152 F.3d at 1194 (noting that § 1915(e)(2)
 23 “parallels the language of Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6)”). In addition, the Court’s
 24 duty to liberally construe a pro se’s pleadings, *see Karim-Panahi v. Los Angeles Police Dept.*,
 25 839 F.2d 621, 623 (9th Cir. 1988), is “particularly important in civil rights cases.” *Ferdik v.
 26 Bonzelet*, 963 F.2d 1258, 1261 (9th Cir. 1992). However, in giving liberal interpretation to a
 27 pro se civil rights complaint, the court may not “supply essential elements of claims that were
 28 not initially pled.” *Ivey v. Board of Regents of the University of Alaska*, 673 F.2d 266, 268 (9th

1 Cir. 1982). “Vague and conclusory allegations of official participation in civil rights violations
 2 are not sufficient to withstand a motion to dismiss.” *Id.*

3 As currently pleaded, the Court finds Plaintiff’s allegations sufficient to survive the sua
 4 sponte screening required by 28 U.S.C. §§ 1915(e)(2) and 1915A(b). *See Lopez*, 203 F.3d at
 5 1126-27. Accordingly, the Court finds Plaintiff is entitled to U.S. Marshal service on his behalf.
 6 *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1915(d) (“The officers of the court shall issue and serve all process, and perform
 7 all duties in [IFP] cases.”); FED.R.CIV.P. 4(c)(3) (“[T]he court may order that service be made
 8 by a United States marshal or deputy marshal ... if the plaintiff is authorized to proceed *in forma
 9 pauperis* under 28 U.S.C. § 1915.”). Plaintiff is cautioned that “the sua sponte screening and
 10 dismissal procedure is cumulative of, and not a substitute for, any subsequent Rule 12[] motion
 11 that [a defendant] may choose to bring.” *Teahan v. Wilhelm*, 481 F. Supp. 2d 1115, 1119 (S.D.
 12 Cal. 2007).

13 **III.**

14 **CONCLUSION AND ORDER**

15 Good cause appearing therefor, **IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** that:

16 1. Plaintiff’s Motion to proceed IFP pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a) [Doc. No. 5] is
 17 **GRANTED.**

18 2. The Secretary of California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, or his
 19 designee, shall collect from Plaintiff’s prison trust account the \$350 balance of the filing fee
 20 owed in this case by collecting monthly payments from the account in an amount equal to twenty
 21 percent (20%) of the preceding month’s income and forward payments to the Clerk of the Court
 22 each time the amount in the account exceeds \$10 in accordance with 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(2).
 23 **ALL PAYMENTS SHALL BE CLEARLY IDENTIFIED BY THE NAME AND NUMBER**
 24 **ASSIGNED TO THIS ACTION.**

25 3. The Clerk of the Court is directed to serve a copy of this Order on Matthew Cate,
 26 Secretary, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, 1515 S Street, Suite 502,
 27 Sacramento, California 95814.

28 **IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that:

1 4. The Clerk shall issue a summons as to Plaintiff's Complaint [Doc. No. 1] upon
 2 Defendants and shall forward it to Plaintiff along with a blank U.S. Marshal Form 285 for
 3 each Defendant. In addition, the Clerk shall provide Plaintiff with a certified copy of this Order
 4 and a certified copy of his Complaint and the summons so that he may serve Defendants. Upon
 5 receipt of this "IFP Package," Plaintiff is directed to complete the Form 285s as completely and
 6 accurately as possible, and to return them to the United States Marshal according to the
 7 instructions provided by the Clerk in the letter accompanying his IFP package. Upon receipt,
 8 the U.S. Marshal shall serve a copy of the Complaint and summons upon Defendants as directed
 9 by Plaintiff on the USM Form 285s. All costs of service shall be advanced by the United States.
 10 *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1915(d); FED.R.CIV.P. 4(c)(3).

11 5. Defendants are thereafter **ORDERED** to reply to Plaintiff's Complaint within the
 12 time provided by the applicable provisions of Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(a). *See* 42
 13 U.S.C. § 1997e(g)(2) (while a defendant may occasionally be permitted to "waive the right to
 14 reply to any action brought by a prisoner confined in any jail, prison, or other correctional
 15 facility under section 1983," once the Court has conducted its sua sponte screening pursuant to
 16 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2) and § 1915A(b), and thus, has made a preliminary determination based
 17 on
 18 the face of the pleading alone that Plaintiff has a "reasonable opportunity to prevail on the
 19 merits," the defendant is required to respond).

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1 6. Plaintiff shall serve upon the Defendants or, if appearance has been entered by
2 counsel, upon Defendants' counsel, a copy of every further pleading or other document
3 submitted for consideration of the Court. Plaintiff shall include with the original paper to be
4 filed with the Clerk of the Court a certificate stating the manner in which a true and correct copy
5 of any document was served on Defendants, or counsel for Defendants, and the date of service.
6 Any paper received by the Court which has not been filed with the Clerk or which fails to
7 include a Certificate of Service will be disregarded.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

DATED: January 19, 2011

Janis L. Sammartino
Honorable Janis L. Sammartino
United States District Judge